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THE MUSKET

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

October 2004 Volume 6; Issue 1

Dr. Jones Assumes Principalship

By Marina Gibbons

"High-octane, all the time," was new principal Dr. Michael Jones' reply when asked to describe Lexington High School. Naturally, LHS's size and intensity would be the most noticeable to Jones, after coming from a high school with a student body numbering less than one-third of our 2,000.

Consequently, Jones has begun work on making our school a more personal community. Supportive of the 'house system' in which students are grouped by deans and counselors, he encourages the formation of smaller, closer communities within the main LHS environment.

Jones names former principal Dr. Earnest Van Seasholes as his mentor. Like Seasholes, Jones can often be found in the hallways between classes or greeting the incoming buses in the morning. He takes the time to attend school sports and arts events, eats in the school cafeteria, and of course, supports the Red Sox and Patriots.

A former English teacher and sports coach himself, Jones believes that change begins in every classroom, one person at a time. He counts among his 'Seven Habits of Successful Teachers' the practice of collegiality, student mentoring, dedication to quality classroom experiences, and communication with the parents of students.

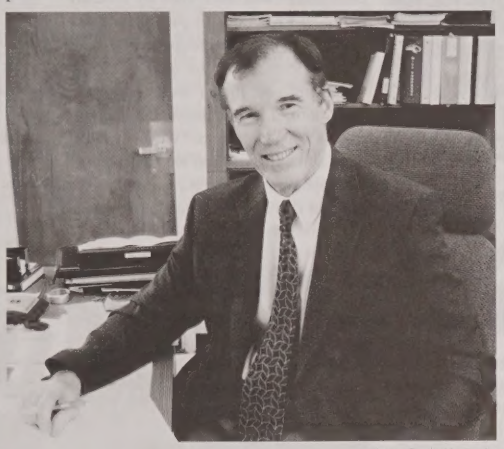

Photo Credit: Yeajin An

Dr. Michael Jones takes over at LHS after tenure in Cohasset.

Although Jones describes LHS's faculty as "outstanding" and the students as "serious about learning," he also realizes how difficult it is for teachers to maintain personal relationships with such a large collection of students, and how easy it could be for individual students to become lost in the system. Still, he encourages teachers to make time to connect with individual students; his own open-door policy is intended to make getting in touch with him easier.

Even though LHS's "intensity, energy, and diversity" are part of what makes working here enjoyable to Jones, he agrees that no student can come into contact with the school's environment without contracting a certain amount of stress. It is popularly accepted that LHS is one of the most competitive and high-achieving schools nationally; there are few or no students that feel no stress at all.

Seasholes' perspective on the matter was that there are various types of both 'positive' and 'unhealthy stress' found at LHS, and that the key to maintaining a healthy school culture lies in the effective management of this inevitable stress. Both principals have agreed that relaxing the levels of 'unhealthy' stress can only benefit students' emotional and physical well-being.

Jones supports Seasholes' previous policies and is not considering making major changes to them. The similarities between Seasholes' and Jones' approaches to Lexington High are likely to make the transition an easy one for students and faculty. At the same time, the differences between their two leadership styles seem likely to enhance students' comfort with the way the school works.

Administration Bans Card Playing During School

Cites Unruly Behavior as Cause for Rule Change

By Amelia Servi

As we all know, card playing was recently banned on LHS grounds during school hours. Since this is a change from last year's policy, many students are upset at the new limitations on their freedom.

Members of the administration made the new rule over the summer. The LHS Student/Faculty Senate is currently discussing a bill that will repeal the card ban. In order for the repeal to pass, the Senate needs a 2/3 majority vote on the bill. If the principal then vetoes it, there must be a majority vote by the School Committee in support of the bill in order for it to pass.

So far, the card-playing ban has been quite unpopular among students; most do not see any merits to the new rule. Although he could not speak for the administration as a whole, Associate Principal George Mechem gave a few reasons for why the ban was implemented. According to Mechem, campus supervisors and teachers noticed a large upsurge in the amount and intensity of card-playing near the end of last year.

They related this increase to the comeback of Poker in our entertainment culture, where the card game has dominated on television, on the Internet and amongst friends. As opposed to other games, Poker has high stakes both in terms of money and pride; players and spectators thus tend to become animated during the game.

"Almost all games escalate," Mechem pointed out. The raised intensity leads to swearing, yelling, slapping the table, and the formation of large crowds. The atmosphere that the game encourages tends to have a "bad vibe", one that Mechem does not want to have associated with the school for the sake of the students, teachers, parents and visitors.

Mechem noted, however, that playing cards can be fun and reduce stress, but has not been a positive thing for the school overall. He tended to discount student concerns about loss of freedom, stating that the school currently places few limitations on students. Since the implementation of the rule, administrators have noticed a decrease in loudness in the Commons areas.

According to one anonymous

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Photo Credit: Christiana Kim

Rules against card playing can be found in the *Student Handbook*.

New Cary Library Draws Student Interest

By Marina Gibbons

There are 65% more available space; 20% more reference materials; 80% more circulating materials; private or group study areas; visible young adult section; rising tide of groups and activities aimed at young adults. All of this, in the recently renovated and re-opened Cary Memorial Library, draws local teenagers into not only the building but an expanding network of library organizations and groups. One such group is the Teen Advisory Board <www.carylibrary.org/ya/TAB.html>, which helps give local teens a voice in running Cary; one recent suggestion was the creation of a program and/or private room for homework.

"I want [Cary] to be a place where people can go and feel comfortable," explains Assistant Director Cynthia Johnson, and the library's makeover has certainly helped further this goal. As the school year resumes with the library up and fully stocked for the first time in years, students are realizing the perks of "new Cary's" convenient study carrels, spacious tables, and deep chairs.

"Aesthetically, it's a lot better than before," explains sophomore Char Morgan; "it seems more like a library than a warehouse," which was one of the problems with the temporary location of Cary Hall. Fellow sophomore Dinah Super agrees that Cary is

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Freshmen Push School to Limit

By Andrew Gerzon

Perhaps one of the biggest and most noticeable differences between this year and last year is the amount of students. If you feel like it's definitely getting crowded in the hallways, you are correct. This year's freshman class is significantly larger than the current number of students in any other grade.

The newest contributors to our expanding school, the class of 2008 has a whopping grand total of 544 students. To put this number in perspective, there are 480 sophomores, 471 juniors, and 444 seniors. (Now don't go reaching for your over-priced Texas Instruments calculator.) All together, there are 1,939 enrolled at LHS. There are more students who go to LHS than people who live in The Vatican!

At the end of the day when you've just had math class and you're all cranky and tired, the last thing you want to do is get caught in a huge mob. Wonder how to avoid getting caught in these annoyingly overcrowded hallways? Well, there are a few steps you could take. Either leave class early so you can beat everyone else going down the halls, or leave class as late as possible.

This will minimize the feelings of claustrophobia, and if your teacher asks why you're late, just blame it on the angry mob. Or, you could always push people. However, this is not recommended. Whichever way you choose to deal with this ongoing problem, just remember that it's a small price to pay for an excellent education.

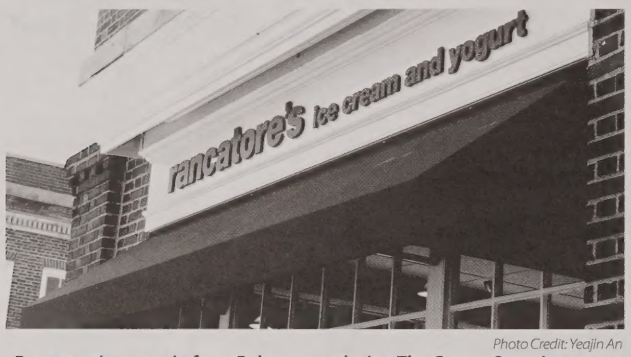

Photo Credit: Yeajin An

Rancatore's moves in from Belmont, replacing The Corner Store in center.

Rancatore's: A New Kid on the Block

By Emily Moss

There is a new face on the streets of Lexington, and its name is Rancatore's. Six weeks ago, this ice cream place moved in to 1752 Mass Ave, replacing The Corner Store. A well-known ice cream shop in Belmont, Rancatore's has been established since 1985.

Lexington High School students have started frequenting the new shop, both because of its atmosphere and its ice cream. The décor was described as "retro" by an LHS student. Megan Phelan, a junior, said, "I thought the inside was very nice, it's very casual. I liked that the employees don't wear uniforms." Though the interior might catch your eye, it is the ice cream that keeps you coming back.

"They have the thickest milkshakes ever, and that's a good thing," one student said. Commenting on flavors like Grapenut Raison and Hydrox Cookie, sophomore Hope Gee remarked, "They have more unusual flavors than your ordinary ice cream place." One junior said that only one flavor was enough for him. "I had the Sweet Cream once, and I was hooked."

Lexington students, however, work both sides of the counter. Senior Joe Musacchia, who has been working at Rancatore's for five weeks, has good things to say about the flavors there. In fact, he stated that "It's the best ice cream I've ever had." He went on to lay out the method behind their original recipes. "It's all been done by experiment to find flavors that are good, and that people like."

Musacchia also described the rotation process at Rancatore's. Aside from a few basic flavors, the employees rotate the flavors very often, so you're never likely to find the same thing twice. In addition to the rotation, the ice cream is made fresh every morning.

When asked about the strangest, wackiest flavor they have, two employees declared in unison, "Junkyard Dog!" One described it as "a Reese's flavored ice cream with whatever we've got laying around the shop."

The one issue that LHS students have with Rancatore's seems to be the price. One junior stated that it was a little expensive, but another senior went as far as to say, "It was outrageously expensive and I won't go back." The employees acknowledge the price of their product (which is $3.25 for a small) but say that "it's entirely worth it."

Cary Library Returns

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"more functional now"; instead of being a student's last resort, Cary is gaining popularity as a place to do homework, meet friends, or relax.

Besides LHS students, it's not uncommon to encounter homeschoolers in Cary. A frequently overlooked group now influxing into the library, homeschooled students are gaining influence in Cary's functions--new organizations are effective ways to both meet peers and gain recognition in community activities.

Note: Opinions of *The Musket* writers do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or Lexington High School. Correspondence to *The Musket* should be addressed to *The Musket*, c/o Lexington High School, 251 Waltham St., Lexington, MA. Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to reject, edit, or admit any or all submissions.

A Cappella Groups Begin New Year

By Andrew Gerzon

At the beginning of the school year you may have noticed the hallways artistically covered with audition flyers for a cappella groups. But since there are so many groups at LHS, how do you choose? Actually, the a cappella groups at LHS have many differences and are quite unique.

For instance, if you were a guy you could look into Pitchpipes, the only all-male a cappella group. "We're the ultimate chick magnet and we like to sing," said sophomore David Radzihovsky. "We thought that after losing so many members last year we wouldn't be as great, but things are turning out well."

The all-female group Euphoria, besides being very talented musically, also "try really hard to balance work and play. We're all a close group of friends," says senior Lindsey Simon. "We have a friendly rivalry with Pitchpipes." But not all the a cappella groups consist of only boys or girls. That's where Mixed Nuts come in.

Mixed Nuts is the only a cappella group with both boys and girls. Sophomore Christopher Voss explained, "I

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Photo Credit: Yeajin An

Olivia Miller, Lindsay Simon, Gracie Lane, and Mika Edgerly make up Euphoria.

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Card Playing Ban

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senior, "[Card playing] is a good thing to do during free blocks. It is nice seeing people playing together...[Card playing is] a good way to relax between classes." None of the students interviewed by the Musket have felt disrupted or unsafe by the presence of Poker games in their midst.

Mechem portrayed the issues of illegal gambling and student tardiness due to card games as secondary. With the new ban, the administration is primarily trying to make the school a more comfortable place for students.

A Cappella Groups

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chose [Mixed Nuts] because it was the only mixed group and I didn't want to be with only guys." Voss also commented on the size of Mixed Nuts. "We're fifteen people, which is huge - we're bigger then Euphoria. It's a good way to make friends with people you didn't know in the beginning of the year."

Although Guacamole is an all-female group, they are also "very different from all the other a cappella groups. We're very unique. We're very different," explained sophomore Tessa Harrison. Harrison explained that what makes Guacamole distinct is the fact that they put a lot of effort into costuming. They also sing songs from other countries, which allows for quite a variety. Harrison added, "All the a cappella groups are very good... they all have a different sound. Compared to other high schools we're very good."

Whichever a cappella group is your personal favorite, you will be happy with any choice. They all have their own distinctive style, and it's definitely worthwile to join. Harrison remarked, "It's just a lot of fun to be a part of it. When I was a freshman I didn't know a lot of upper classmen, but then I joined Guac[amole] and we all became close friends. I think everyone should have an opportunity to do that." All of the a cappella groups will soon perform in the Fall Jamboree.

Chartwells Gets Competitive

School Lunches Show Improvement

By Amelia Servi

The school lunch service is cooking up some surprises, according to Cathleen Higgins, Director of Dining Services at Chartwells Food Services, and two floor supervisors. In the past they have been discouraged by theft, but now want to connect with the student population.

The main competition to the school lunch service is food purchased in Lexington Center. In response to this, the lunch service is making efforts this year to serve fancier foods that will be more competitive with local restaurants. The changes include more exhibition cooking where students can watch their food being made to order, and bread bowl style meals that have been popular with students.

The service now offers stir-fry once a week as well as a variety of other hot and Mexican style foods. New this year is a menu that will be posted each week in homerooms and will give the week's daily specials. Breakfast offerings on Thursdays have been expanded to include a buffet with an omelet option. The deli and Mexican food windows have been moved to Commons 2, which is often less crowded than Commons 1, in order to create a stronger identity for Commons 2. They have also added two new cash registers in order to make the lines move faster.

According to [the Director of Dining Services], a six-inch sub, pasta, and salad that you can buy at LHS for $1.75 would be $7.00 dollars at d'Angelos.

In many students' minds, school lunches and fancy do not go together. However, by the numbers, students seem happy with the offerings. The lunches are very popular at LHS, feeding LHS students, LABBB students, and faculty alike. Ms. Higgins noted that a large portion of the food sold is consumed by student athletes. The cost of lunch at the school is notably lower than the cost of eating out. According to Ms. Higgins, a six-inch sub, pasta, and salad that you can buy at LHS for $1.75 would be $7.00 dollars at d'Angelos.

The staff cares about the quality of the food, cooking the meals between each lunch period. The pizzas and the sandwiches are made at LHS, as are the desserts. All staff are serve-safe trained, and are re-certified every two years.

The lunch staff always appreciates constructive suggestions which can be e-mailed to lexingtonschoollunch@yahoo.com. All money made from school lunches goes to the school lunch program. The more food sold, the more options the program can offer. Eat up!

Interpol Releases New CD "Antics"

By David Ganzi

The "Subterranean" favorite Interpol released a new album on September 28. This follow-up to the critically acclaimed Turn on the Bright Lights is impressive and shows that the band is moving in the right direction: forward. One can see the differences between Antics and Interpol's debut from the first song, as it features a keyboardist.

Antics is not inundated with keyboards, but they are a nice addition to the trademark Joy Division sound of lead singer Paul Banks' voice; it tends to become monotonous in Turn on the Bright Lights. Also, Interpol is moving away from long musical interludes and toward a noticeably more poppy, almost Coldplay-influenced sound. This shows that Interpol is not just riding on the popular wave of NYC bands, but is indeed developing on their own accord.

Highlights of the album include "Not Even Jail" and "Length of Love", which are decidedly different than music from the debut. The song "Slow Hands" was the new album's first single, and serves as a trademark song aimed at revitalizing the Interpol fan base. Fear not, Interpol has changed. Yet if you found any part of their debut album appealing, I highly suggest Antics as well.

Photo Credit: Amazon.com

Interpol imitates the Brady Bunch.

"Star Wars" DVD Trilogy Hits and Misses

By David Ganzi

The "Star Wars" trilogy has finally come out on DVD. The wait has been horribly long. And no, this re-release was not a result of drastic changes to the original trilogy, but rather an attempt to thicken George Lucas's wallet. These DVDs are the Special Editions that, when released in the late nineties in movie theatres and on tape, included a handful of additional changes. This collection, with even more never-before-seen material, is a huge blow to the hardcore "Star Wars" fans who condemned the Special Edition alterations in the first place.

Most of the changes involve special effects. As a result, the original "Star Wars" is infested with horribly unrealistic computer animation that contrasts sharply with the puppets and models used in the original movies. The authenticity of the new computer animated Yoda, for example, (who is not in the original trilogy but is in the newer "Star Wars" movies), does not compare to that of his predecessor, puppet Yoda. Computer animated landscapes, Jabba the Hut, and a lounge singer in "The Return of the Jedi" are unwelcome changes to the originals. Most shocking, however, were the changes to the musical score; one of the best characteristics of the trilogy has also been tainted.

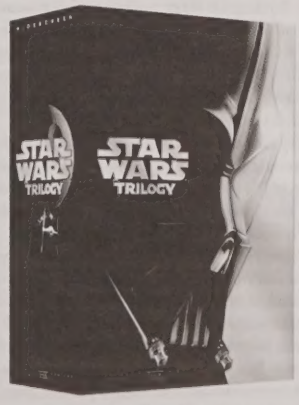

Photo Credit: Amazon.com

Thin media yields thin improvements.

One would expect the movies to look spotless from the editing, but there are still blatant mistakes in video quality. One of the most blaring examples is in the first "Star Wars" film, where TIE fighters are surrounded by boxes of color against the blackness of space. Apparently, the addition of new things to a 25-year-old series is more important than revitalizing the originals to their past glory.

But even with all of these aforementioned discrepancies, most of "Star Wars" stays nicely intact. At least Lucas left "The Empire Strikes Back" relatively unscathed. "Return of the Jedi" has a couple annoying changes like the computer animated lounge singer and the substitution of Anakin Skywalker in the final scene for a teenage Hayden Christensen. But the original "Star Wars: A New Hope" features the most cutting and pasting by far.

I still reluctantly recommend the DVDs because their quality, however lacking, is still superior to the VHS versions. However, if a Laserdisc version of the Trilogy is available, you would be well advised to pick that up instead!

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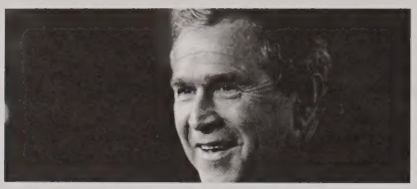

War in Iraq: "Wrong Time, Wrong Place"

By Rachel Kase

It is unclear who the Bush administration is waging war against, and equally ambiguous what our country is fighting for. However, the wide array of misjudgments and mistakes involved with the war in Iraq are unquestionable. The administration's original reason for waging war against Iraq was to prevent them from using supposed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) that were in the possession of Saddam Hussein. However, no WMD have turned up in the eighteen months since the commencement of the operation.

"This preemptive action has created a military and political quagmire in a region that was volatile to begin with."

After the original basis for the war was refuted, Bush's administration has changed the reason to building democracy in an unstable region and "preempting" the construction of WMD. This preemptive action has created a military and political quagmire in a region that was volatile to begin with. John Kerry's characterization of the war as "wrong place, wrong time" rings true.

Over the past couple of years the Bush administration has presented four primary, though vague, justifications for the war in Iraq. The administration charged Iraq with holding WMD, promised that Iraq had hazardous relations with terrorists, and claimed to be ridding Iraq of a dangerous regime, in addition to "protecting" Americans from an "imminent" threat. The reasons seemed legitimate at first, when Bush claimed that Iraq was about to attack our country using stockpiles of WMD. However, weapons inspectors' searches of Iraq from top to bottom were fruitless. The fact is, Iraq does not posses any biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons.

Bush also tried to justify needless fighting by naming it the "war against terrorism". However, he chose to invade Iraq, a country that has now been proved to have no affiliation whatsoever with Al Quaida or Osama bin Laden, the organizers of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Furthermore, it now seems that the administration had access to this information even before the war.

Bush's campaign to install a democracy in Iraq has alienated the Iraqi people by appearing as an occupation force, killing thousands of innocent civilians in crossfire, and creating anarchy.

War should be avoided at all costs unless absolutely necessary. However, there is no compelling evidence that indicates that attacking Iraq is in direct defense of the American people. Bush's choice to reinvent the accepted standard of warfare in the name of defense against terrorism, and the imbroglio that has ensued, proves it is impossible to base war on suppositions.

The war in Iraq has accomplished little and created

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Bush Beats Kerry on Security Issues

By Robert Bongiovi

This election will be won by the candidate that the voting public believes will keep us safer. All other issues take a backseat to the defense of our country, George W. Bush's strength. He will be re-elected because he is the candidate who wins on the issue of national security.

In Afghanistan, hundreds of terrorists have been captured or killed, terrorist training camps have been shut down and the Taliban is out of power. We are safer today because of what has been accomplished in Afghanistan. The fall of Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime, although hard to see now, will contribute to making the world safer.

The pre-emptive strike doctrine has taken the fight to our enemies. Two dangerous countries will no longer harbor terrorists, and Libya has been scared into giving up its weapons of mass destruction development program. Bush is singlehandedly responsible for all of these accomplishments.

The belief that the U.S. should go to war to remove Saddam Hussein from power was not a popular one. Bush's core values of protecting America were behind his decision to wage war against Iraq. He acts according to his conscience, which is why his supporters know him to be a strong and steadfast Commander-in-Chief who will always have America's safety as his top concern.

John Kerry, on the other hand, voted for the Iraq war for purely political reasons and has changed and revised his position on that war several times. He eventually decided that being strong against Bush's Iraq war is the position that will best help get him elected. Kerry has shown he would not be an aggressive leader in the war against terrorism by playing politics with national security.

"Bush's core values of protecting America were behind his decision to wage war against Iraq."

Kerry has a record in the Senate of consistently voting against any increase in defense funding and has voted against funding for every major weapons system currently in our arsenal for use in the war on terror. He even voted against the 87 billion dollars meant to supplement our thinly stretched troops in Iraq. If one does not believe Kerry is weak on defense, one needs only look at his senate voting record.

Kerry's moral core is difficult to determine and, sadly, may amount to simply, 'What do I have to do and say to get elected?' Having changed his position on two wars, Kerry has clearly demonstrated his uncanny ability to avoid choosing a position and sticking with it.

A senator can waiver in his beliefs on when war is needed and when it is not, without major consequence to the nation, but anyone who wants to be President must be able to make up their mind before they speak out and act on an issue. Bush can do this because his conscience dictates to him what is right or wrong, regardless of which position would lead him to political gain.

Most people who are voting for Kerry aren't voting

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The Dangers of Certainty

By Josiah Reibstein

There's no doubt that Senator John Kerry possesses many discernable faults, but these flaws pale when they are placed adjacent to the hopeless mess of George W. Bush's presidency. Though Kerry has been painted as a serial "flip-flopper," it is ironically Bush's unyielding certainty that has made his presidential term the most dangerous and damaging to our country.

In just four years, President Bush has managed to create one of the greatest economic deficits ever. He has intensified our health care crisis, polished off the worst environmental record in our nation's history, and turned the US Supreme Court, a long standing constituent of moderateness and balance, into an organization dominated principally by the radical right. Most blatantly of all, he has propelled America into a needless quagmire in Iraq that has resulted in thousands of American - and Iraqi civilian - deaths.

"Even when the surreal, grainy images of the sadism at Abu Ghraib prison were revealed to the media, President Bush continued in his rigidity."

Throughout all the poverty, casualties, and slow disintegration of American constitutional values, Bush has never taken back a statement. He has never apologized, never averted his course from original plans. He has stuck with the hollow and unsubstantiated ambiguity - that the present course of action is correct, and that he is doing the right thing. Even after countless terrorist attacks in an Iraq that does not want to be occupied, and even after searches have failed to uncover the fabled weapons of mass destruction, Bush has not once offered an apology or remedy to the ruptures caused by his crusader-like actions.

Even when the surreal, grainy images of the sadism at Abu Ghraib prison were revealed to the media, President Bush continued in his rigidity. He still proclaimed that invading Iraq had made the world safer, despite the confirmation that Sadamn Hussein was not connected to the tragic attacks at 9/11 or the terrorist association Al Quaeda.

Then again, Bush does seem to have a talent for revising his statements. He still stands by his conviction that the Iraq war was necessary, but other positions are wavering. "Mission accomplished," he grinned. Yet Iraqi and American bodies pile up every day, some hidden in flag-draped coffins, others unrecognizable beneath piles of rubble. Bush then remarked, "I never said we could win this war on terror."

Bush's black-and-white views of humanity complement his arrogant steadfastness. Sadly, these faults have been labeled as his strengths. His "morality", in fact, is nothing more than a skewed portrayal of good and evil, almost child-like in its monochromatic simplicity. He said smugly that he would make no distinction between the terrorists and those who harbor them. Apparently this must apply as well to the innocent men, women, and children in the vicinity of these "evil-doers". "You are either with us, or you are with the terrorists," he stated.

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Volleyballers Find Service Tough

By Arjun Gokhale

The girls volleyball team has had a disappointing season. They are currently 5-9 with 4 games left in the season, mathematically eliminating them from the playoffs. However, there have been more than a few bright spots on the team.

Backed by an extremely supportive coach, they have shown incredible resiliency, bouncing back from huge deficits, including their match against Stoneham. After being dominated in their first game, the girls came back strong and defeated Stoneham in the second one.

Down by twenty points late in the third and decisive game, the girls battled back and closed the deficit to nine, the eventual margin of defeat. They way that the girls played hard despite know that the game was all but lost is an example of the support of their coach, Jane Bergin.

Senior Captain Jill Eisenberg sang praises of the coach, "Coach Jane Bergin has been there for us all the way. She's our biggest cheerleader and motivator. No matter who we're playing, and regardless of the score, she makes us believe from the start that we can."

A few of the important contributors on the team have been Jen Kozin, Amy Greenberg, Tara Keramaty and Natasha Dolgin. Co-Captains Vanessa Cirella and Jill Eisenberg will try to inspire the players and finish the season on a good note.

Girls Soccer Off to Shaky Start

By Kevin Slane

The Girl's Soccer team, whose season was described as "promising" by head coach Keith Woods, has started the season off with a disappointing 2-9-2 record. They have been unable to find the spark to kick their game into high gear.

The team is led this year by senior captains Tracy Chang, Natasha Groblewski, and Alexa Dougherty, who have been superb leaders on the field for the Minuteman. The team has lost several players to injuries, including junior Rochelle Butler, who broke her shin in the preseason.

Despite the adversity, the Minutemen have begun to improve and are beginning to click as a team. Even some of the games that the Minutemen have lost were close, and were keyed by costly mistakes.

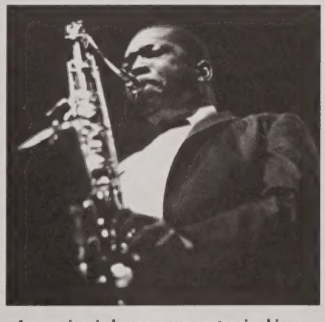
One of the players remarked "there have been at least three games this year we could have won, had we not messed up." Coach Woods hopes to cut down on such mistakes, remarking that "We need to stay focused the entire game, and not allow ourselves to beat ourselves."

Hopefully, the team will continue to improve as the season progresses, and earn some respect throughout the Middlesex league.

John Coltrane Captivates With "Ascension"

By Josiah Reibstein

Certainly the most audacious of his recordings, and arguably the most brilliant, *Ascension* is without a doubt one of John Coltrane's significant achievements, a major contribution to the jazz world as a whole. Recorded during a difficult time in Coltrane's life - just after the divorce of his first wife, Naima - the album remains a source of interest and controversy long after its first release.



Ascension is by no means typical jazz.

Ascension is by no means a typical jazz recording. Apart from its unusual, lopsided instrumentation, it is most notable for its near abandonment of classic jazz rules. The saxes and trumpets barely adhere to McCoy Tyner's strong chord playing on the piano, and no definite "lines" can be heard in each player's solos.

The main melody, an echoing progression of five notes, is completely free; there is no rhythm to restrain it, there are no cues. Essentially, the instrumentalists have complete liberation from any elements of the standard jazz method.

On a cautionary note, it is impossible to enjoy this recording after listening to it only once. It's easy to label the wild, screaming sounds as ugly and piercing. The melding of the saxes and trumpets come off as strident and raucous, simply a din rather than actual music.

However, a second listening reveals a twisted harmony. The sound is at once bizarre and beautiful, and the competent accompaniment of Tyner on piano and Elvin Jones on drums locks every piece of the group together.

Ascension is an unwise introduction for people who are unfamiliar with John Coltrane's work. However, for those who already have listened to his earlier, more lyrical works (Blue Train, Giant Steps, Impressions, etc) *Ascension* is highly recommended. It is powerful, yet haunting, and the strange, beautiful solos linger in the listener's mind long after the music ends. *Ascension* is more than just a recording. It is an experience.

Brand Old Music in "Garden State"

By Andrea Mercado

For anyone who has seen the movie "Garden State," he or she knows that the soundtrack is unusually good. Perhaps one of the reasons why people like it so much is because, in a sense, they already know it. And I do not mean from watching the movie, but rather that most of the artists and songs have been around before.

Soundtrack outshines Natalie Portman and Zach Braff in Garden State.

They just have never really been noticed until now, when they whap the listener upside the head together on one CD. One example of a familiar artist is Coldplay. Chances are, many viewers have listened to or even owned Coldplay's CDs long before the movie came out. So "Don't Panic" should be immediately recognizable off the soundtrack.

Does Remy Zero sound familiar? Their song "Fair" is on the soundtrack, but they are better known for their theme song "Save Me" from Smallville on the WB. Nick Drake, who has a song on the soundtrack, has also been played on the WB before. His most recognizable song, however, was featured in a Volkswagen commercial. This commercial has teens driving through the woods on a calm, clear night to go to a party. They decide to continue driving when they see how the rambunctious party will break their relaxed mood. "One of These Things First" is an equally calming Drake song that is on the soundtrack.

Iron and Wine... ever heard of them? Their song "Such Great Heights" should sound familiar. Iron and Wine covered the Postal Service hit currently playing on the radio. Simon and Garfunkel should also ring a bell. If our generation does not know these people, at least our parents no. My dad listened to the soundtrack with me when he found out that "The Only Living Boy in New York" was featured.

Almost everyone has heard these songs before, but may not remember them well. This is why the soundtrack has that nostalgic feel. So then how does Zach Braff, the movie's leading actor, writer, director, and executive producer, get such transient songs to stay together? By adding a cheesy line, of course: "You gotta hear this song. It'll change your life, I promise". This was The Shins' "New Slang". For me, listening to this song was not a life-altering event. It did, however, get stuck in my head while picking apples. This soundtrack will not change your life. But with its familiar songs and artists, it will take what you already know, clear it up a bit, and bring back some memorable songs.

G. W. Bush Opinion

Continued from Page 4

for him because they believe he would be stronger on national security. They vote for Kerry because they have a visceral hatred for Bush. However, undecided voters see that our President, George W. Bush, has been and will continue to be an effective leader in the war against terrorism.

John Kerry Opinion 1

Continued from Page 4

many American enemies. It has killed over one thousand American troops and countless more Iraqi civilians. The severe manipulations of the truth that Bush has presented to the American people have not only led to an unsuccessful attempt to create democracy in Iraq, but jeopardized democracy in America through fearmongering.

John Kerry Opinion 2

Continued from Page 4

As the economy plummets, Bush still casts out his message to the American people. And as the death toll mounts, he edits and modifies his opinions to complement the blunders he has wrought. Call Kerry a flip-flopper, if you will, but it is impossible to ignore Bush's rapidly evolving motives for initiating the war on terror, in contrast with his stanch statement that Iraq's invasion was justified, moral, and an improvement upon the world's safety.

Emerson once said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." In no situation can it be applied more aptly than the present one. Bush's "core values" have guided him into a disastrous presidency, damaging to not only the American people but to those he attempts to "liberate".

Football Thwarted in Title Defense

By Larry Schweitzer

After winning the Middlesex League championship for the first time in 19 years, the 19th ranked Lexington football team looks poised to defend their title in 2004. However, a crushing defeat at the hands of the Woburn Tanners ended any hopes the Minutemen had of repeating last year's success. The Minutemen were hopeful with the return of nine starters from last season, including senior offensive standouts quarterback Mike Busa, running back Jesse Spartichino and wide receiver Hayato Tsurumaki.

Last year, Spartichino set a school record with 19 touchdowns scored and Busa threw for 10 touchdowns in his first full season as a starter. Tsurumaki also came into his own and was Lexington's most dominant receiver, collecting four receptions for touchdowns over the course of his terrific 2003 season.

The football team has started their season well, with two wins over Westford Academy and Stoneham, and a loss to Concord-Carlisle. The first matchup of the season was at Westford Academy, which Lexington won in a defensive dominated nail-biter that went into overtime.

Neither team managed any offense over the first half, but the Minutemen struck first on a short run by Spartichino to gain a 6-0 lead in the third quarter. Westford responded to tie up the game later in the period.

At the end of the fourth quarter, a Spartichino touchdown was called back because he stepped out of bounds. The Minutemen charged downfield to the one-yard line before losing a fumble. Time ran out in regulation and the game went to overtime.

In OT Spartichino scored his second rushing touchdown, as part of 120-yard day, and the locals converted a two-point conversion. On Westord's ensuing possession they scored a touchdown but failed to make the two-point conversion, giving Lexington a victory in their first game of the 2004 campaign, with a score of 14-12. Seniors Paul Wentzell and Jason Kashmanian led the defense, with 6 and 5 tackles, respectively.

In the home opener, the Minutemen lost to Concord-Carlisle 14-12, in a tough game for the second straight year. Though Spartichino scored one touchdown and ran for 80 yards and Tsurumaki caught a touchdown pass, there was very little other offense for the Minutemen. Senior Harrison Awrach was Lexington's leading tackler, with 8 stops, but the defense could not contain Concord-Carlisle running back Donnie Driscoll, who ran for 125 yards and 2 touchdowns to send Lexington to a rare home defeat.

The Minutemen rebounded in their next game and crushed Stoneham 31-14, despite injuries to Busa (broken thumb), Tsurumaki (sprained ankle), Wentzell (broken wrist) and a host of other starters. Junior Brian Byrne started his first game at QB and handled the team well, while Spartichino ran rampant over the Spartans defense for 190 yards and 2 touchdowns.

In all, Lexington running backs accumulated nearly 300 yards on the ground, using a combination of Seth Garro, Andrew Flori and Darius Walker after Spartichino left the game. Ross Curley, filling in for Tsurumaki, had 4 receptions and scored 2 touchdowns. Awrach once again led the team in tackles, with 4.

Injuries have been a major factor for the Minutemen this year, even from before the beginning of the season when senior starting defensive end Gabe Maeck tore his ACL and was lost for the year. Tsurumaki, Busa and Wentzell all missed the Stoneham game, and it looks as though Busa and Wentzell will be out for a number of weeks while their broken bones heal.

Over the course of the season seniors Troy Thornton, who has been dominant on defense, and Jon Elkin both sustained shoulder injuries. Senior Mark Barons received a concussion and will continue to miss time. Despite the run of injuries, the Minutemen have prevailed in their games and are currently 1-1 in the Middlesex League.

Photo Credit: Yeajin An

Lexington Varsity Field Hockey plays against Burlington High School.

Golf Team is Fore Real in '04

By Max Rollinger

With a solid third-place finish in their section, the boys golf team qualified recently for the state tournament. After a solid season in 2003, the Lexington High School golf team quickly stormed to a 6-1 record to begin their 2004 schedule and clinched a post season berth with two victories during the last few weeks of the season.

After a crushing one point defeat at Pine Meadows against arch rival Woburn, the Minutemen bounced back with three consecutive wins, including two grinding matches against Belmont and Stoneham. Arguably the most impressive of Lexington's five matches, however, was their most recent triumph on the road against Reading. Led by the dynamic one-two punch of senior Lala Anai and junior Mike Sramowitz, the Minutemen got off to an early lead that they would not relinquish.

Upperclassmen David Sykes, Mike Clarke, David Ganzi and James Vanneman had plenty of firepower in their clubs as well and helped the team to hold off the Rockets for an important 41 - 31 victory at the Meadowbrook Golf Course.

New Coaches Lead Boys Soccer

By Alex Simmons

Last year the Boys Soccer team qualified for the MIAA division 1 North Section of the playoffs. In the first round they lost to Medford, who went on to win the North Section of the Division 1 bracket. Lexington played great defense and held Medford's high powered offense scoreless in regular time. Mustang All-American forward Tigao Delboni scored the game-winning goal late in the first period of overtime, but the Minutemen did well to extend the game as long as they did, considering that Delboni amassed 52 points during the 18 game league season.

This year's coaching staff are all first year members. James Wood has taken over the Varsity job after long-time head coach Bob Hartshorn retired at the end of last season. Dan Rudolph, an All-American during his time at Trinity College, took over the Junior Varsity job. Ken Bateman will be coaching this year's Freshman team. In addition, Coach Wood will have Todd McMillan as his new assistant for the Varsity team.

Defense was definitely Lexington's hallmark last season. This season the Minutemen possesses the attacking options which they lacked last season. Senior captain Philipp Schöeniger will be key to the team's success on offense this year. Forwards Thomas Steiner, David Smoot, Marco Abela, and Alex Lach give the Minutemen four solid options up front. Schöeniger, Brian Longo, Peter Frank, Eric Driscol, Alex Simmons, Chris O'Connor, Andrew Goodrich, and Peter Goodrich make up one of the deepest midfields in the entire Middlesex league.

Lexington lost all four of last year's starting defenders, so senior captain Mike Fentin, along with Nick Levy, Jon Cunha, Willi Ballenthin, Jason Barth, Chris Lee, and Garret Asta will be carrying the brunt of the defensive duties for the team. Goalkeepers senior Scott Hunter and sophomore Jasper Drisko give the Minutemen two solid options in net.

Lexington had no time to ease their way into the season as they faced Stoneham, who won the Middlesex league and division championships. Lexington struggled to penetrate the organized Spartan defense and lost 3-0. Lexington rebounded quickly and won decisively 4-1 against Melrose.

The Minutemen have a record of 4-3 this season, with wins coming against Melrose, Wakefield, Belmont, and Reading. At this pace the Minutemen should be on their way to another playoffs birth, and hopefully this will be the year that the team can finally get that elusive playoff win.

Photo Credit: Yeajin An

Chris Lee moves the ball upfield against the Wakefield Warriors.